

Some Good News

By Susan Love, Lions Gate CEO

Three months ago, when the pandemic first hit and we all went into shelter-in-place mode, the number one priority for everyone at Lions Gate was to do all they could to keep residents safe, healthy, and supported. While the daily news sometimes seemed overwhelming, there were always stories to be found that highlighted the good in this world. SOME GOOD NEWS is exactly what we all need right now, so this issue of our newsletter is packed from top to bottom with stories of heartwarming efforts from the Lions Gate staff. I am overwhelmed with pride at the kindness and care each and every one of them have given to our residents. It may have been all-in-a-day's work to them, but it has meant the world to me and to the families with loved ones living in our community. While I can't list every name here, I want everyone to know how this amazing staff has come together as one to support our residents. I hope all who read this newsletter celebrate their courageous spirits, their generous hearts, their never-ending creativity, and their unfaltering kindness. I am humbled by their selflessness. Each and every one of them are the reason that our community has become stronger, and "We Are Better Together!"

The administration and residents are so grateful to the Lions Gate staff for all they have done to keep everyone safe and healthy. This banner above the employee entrance says it all!



As CDC and local health agencies update operating guidelines, each week we look forward to safely opening up new activities for our residents. As of this newsletter printing, we are now hosting live Lions Gate University lectures for up to 22 people in socially distanced seating, and two people are now allowed to swim in the pool at a time. It's small, but it's a start!



I'm sure many of you reading this can think of individuals that have made a difference in your own life over the last 3 months — a neighbor, a teacher, a grocery clerk, or a food deliverer. I urge you to thank them for making your day a little brighter and the burden of worry a little lighter. No one knows what tomorrow will bring, but I have confidence that we can face whatever that may be with a clear eye and an open heart because we are sharing the journey together. Stay safe and healthy, and may you all find a little light in the solitude.

Warmly,

Susan Love

PS: In this newsletter chock full of Some Good News, I would be remiss if I didn't mention Lions Gate's B'nai Mitzvah. In April, we quietly celebrated our 13th anniversary. Building our own Life Plan Community, celebrating Jewish roots and traditions was quite a groundbreaking undertaking over a dozen years ago, and I couldn't be more proud of all that we have accomplished since 2007. There are many residents that have been with us since we opened 13 years ago, and they are a shining testament to how a life well-lived should look. I want to thank the Lions Gate Board of Trustees, my Lions Gate colleagues, and my Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey colleagues for all they have done to support this thriving community. I look forward to the day when the entire Lions Gate community can come together and share a rousing collective cheer of L'Chaim! Here's to the next 13 years together. May we appreciate every single day!

COVID-19 STATUS: The Lions Gate community is COVID-19 FREE!

Thanks to strict testing protocols and adherence to CDC guidelines, all residents and employees are healthy.

WE ARE *Better* TOGETHER

At **LIONS GATE**, the lines of communication are ALWAYS open!

There is a Chinese proverb that advises “*Be in readiness for favorable winds.*” That proverb resonates deeply with Chris Walley, Director of Sales & Marketing at Lions Gate.

“I am a planner,” said Chris. “I have always felt the heart of my job here at Lions Gate is to help individuals plan for the future. Planning means you’re taking baby steps now in preparation for those favorable winds that will gently carry you into a new phase of life. We are doing everything we can now to keep our residents safe, and at the same time we’re working to be ready for when the favorable winds blow in with confirmation that the danger of this pandemic has truly passed, and we can throw open the front doors again.”

Chris has worked tirelessly through this pandemic to keep the lines of communication open between Lions Gate staff, residents, and families. The first item of business for Chris and her team was to set up the Lions Gate Crisis Communication System. This shares real-time updates about the virus to residents and their families via email, text, and voicemail. These communications were then posted on the COVID page of the Lions Gate website. Every public notification letter sent by Susan Love, Lions Gate CEO, was posted there, detailing evolving protocols, tallies of residents or staff who had tested positive, and positive outcomes for those who had recovered.

“Transparency is always our goal,” said Chris. “Every piece of COVID-related information we learned, we wanted to make sure our families knew it as well. Transparency is the foundation of trust, and these families have entrusted us with the care of their loved one. We’re all working together to achieve the same thing — the long-term health and safety of our residents.”

Next, the staff set up Zoom Meetings hosted by Susan Love, facilitating Q&A sessions between families, the Lions Gate Clinical Team, and the medical panel from the Rowan University Institute for Successful Aging. There were separate Zoom Meetings held for Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Skilled Nursing families. Families were encouraged to ask questions, and the Zoom meetings continued until every single question was answered.

“The goal of our Zoom panels was to provide families with three things: the very latest findings by the CDC, a sense of how our medical protocols run on site, and a clear picture of how the day-to-day care of their loved ones were being carried out. We wanted complete transparency with our families. Vague reassurances can’t hold a candle to the relief people

feel when you give them hard data, clear facts, and specific information. When you’re in the middle of a pandemic, you don’t have all the answers. We needed to be completely candid and transparent about what we did and didn’t know. That’s what these Zoom panels accomplished.”

As a follow-up to the Zoom panels, the clinical team also established a clinical care hotline where families could email or call with questions or concerns, and all calls were returned within 24 hours.

So while Chris has COVID communication well in hand, how is she preparing Lions Gate for those “favorable winds” of the future?

“At Lions Gate the welcome mat is ALWAYS out, and we are thrilled to be welcoming new residents each month,” said Chris. “We’re open, and we’d love to meet potential new residents to talk about the benefits of living in our safe and secure Life Plan Community. In light of the current COVID-19 restrictions, Lions Gate is only conducting virtual tours at the time this newsletter is going to press. But we have several meeting options available, so people can choose the one that makes them feel most comfortable — an online Zoom video chat, a private FaceTime chat, a face-to-face meeting in our highly sanitized Welcome Center, an outdoor face-to-face meeting at our community, or a socially-distanced face-to-face meeting on their home patio. I’m happy to accommodate whatever meeting method works best for them. Our contactless virtual Zoom Tours make it easy for anyone to view our beautiful community.”

So as we all look to enjoy a quiet moment social distancing in the summer sun, and hope those favorable winds blow in for the fall, take a moment to consider where you might want those favorable winds to take you in the future. “Whether you are looking to move to Lions Gate, or choose to take another path,” said Chris, “planning for the future is what is important. It gives you something to look forward to, and we all certainly can use that sense of optimism right now.”



Meet Rabbi Rayna Grossman

Rabbi Rayna Grossman didn't always think she was going to grow up to be a Rabbi. Born and raised in Buffalo, NY, in a reconstructionist Jewish family, she admits she was always drawn to shul and Jewish education. Her mother used to joke that she thought Rayna should become a lawyer because she liked to debate so much. But she had a heart for service, so she decided to attend Brandeis to earn a Bachelors degree in sociology, and later attended the University at Buffalo to earn her Masters degree in Social Work. Over the course of two years after receiving her MSW, Rayna worked in a domestic violence shelter, a housing discrimination agency, and in an education program for teens to help them make healthy life choices.

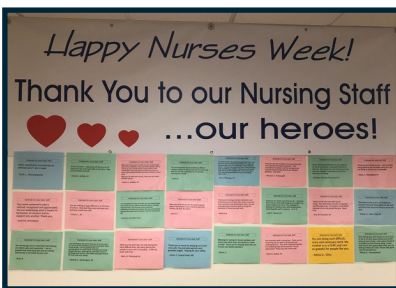


"My mother was a social worker, and I became a social worker myself before I chose to become a Rabbi," said Rabbi Rayna. "I truly loved engaging with people through a social lens, but there was always a little voice in my head that kept nagging at me to become a Rabbi."

Rabbi Rayna took the plunge, and entered the RRC (The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College) in Wyncote, PA, in 2012. She lived in Israel for 10 months between 2014 and 2015, and studied at The Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem. When she returned to the states to finish her Rabbinical studies at RRC, she took an internship at Lions Gate. In fact, she was Lions Gate's first Rabbinic Intern starting in September 2015, and when Rabbi Lewis Eron retired in 2017, she became our much-loved Director of Religious Services.

"There's actually a lot of shared skills between being a social worker and being a Rabbi," said Rabbi Rayna. "At the heart of both, you have to love people, and want the best for them in life. The community that has come together here at Lions Gate is one I love with all my heart, and it is my honor to serve them in any way I can. This pandemic has certainly been challenging, but everyone here understands that as long as we work together, we will come through this stronger than before."

The Wall of Gratitude and Appreciation



As soon as the shelter-in-place order took effect, Rabbi Rayna and Rabbinic Intern, Rachel Davidson, put out calls for support among colleagues and friends. Messages poured in from around the world expressing thanks to the Lions Gate staff for their dedication and sacrifice on behalf of the residents. And thus, the Wall of Gratitude and Appreciation was born. Rabbi Rayna packed the wall at the employee entrance with messages of support and thanks.

"Every time the Lions Gate staff comes through that door, I hope they take note of how much love and support awaits

them," said Rabbi Rayna. "We want them to know how grateful everyone is for all they do."

Rabbi Rayna's care and concern for the staff also inspired her to work with Rabbinic Intern, Rachel Davidson, to create personalized blessings for each department, from Housekeeping to Finance. Rabbi Rayna also created mindfulness meditations and notes of support for the staff to pick up at the check-in table as they were leaving for the day so that they had the support they needed after a long shift.

"I am keenly aware of how interconnected the staff at Lions Gate is," said Rabbi Rayna. "If one department or even one person doesn't feel supported and valued, it impacts us all. If one mindfulness meditation or prayer for healing can end their shift on a note of peace, then it re-energizes them to walk through the doors with a smile on their face the next day. We need each and every person on this staff to want to be here. It takes a village..."

Always up for a new challenge, Rabbi Rayna took all of her services and Jewish learning classes virtual during this pandemic so that residents could still enjoy worshipping together as a congregation, even though they were apart. She pre-recorded two Shabbat services every Friday night and every Saturday morning, and they were streamed on the closed circuit Lions Gate TV channel 1970 so residents never missed out. To support residents, Rabbi Rayna had also done everything from singing prayers over the phone, to making flyers with prayers for healing for those who tested positive for COVID-19, to facilitating Zoom Shiva services for those who lost loved ones but couldn't attend the service while they were sheltering-in-place.

"Everyone bears the ups and downs of life in different ways," said Rabbi Rayna. "Many residents at Lions Gate look to me for spiritual inspiration. Others want challenging conversations about Judaism. Some just need a companion to sit quietly with. I am happy to be present in whatever capacity speaks to their heart. It is my honor to be part of the Lions Gate family."

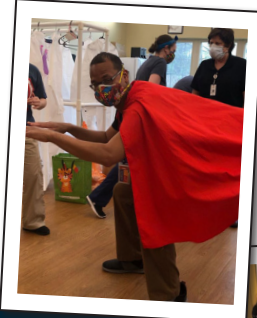
Rabbi Rayna is the most wonderfully upbeat, energetic, optimistic person, and Lions Gate is so lucky she has made her home with us here. We are all the better for her intelligence, her compassion, and her positivity. You rock, Rabbi Rayna!

LIONS GATE GOOD NEWS PHOTO ALBUM



Lions Gate received an urgent supply request from the Hamilton Continuing Care (HCC) skilled nursing facility in Hamilton, NJ. HCC was completely out of gowns, and their order was delayed. Lions Gate had been tenacious in sourcing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for our staff, so we were happy to step in and assist a fellow Long-Term Care Community. Pictured is Lions Gate COO/CFO David Thompson, assisting Thomas Gibb from Hamilton Continuing Care load his van with 1,000 gowns. What a great Mitzvah! *Kol Hakavod Lions Gate!*

A pandemic doesn't stop Occupational Therapy sessions at Lions Gate! Here, resident Marion Zachariades is outside on her patio exercising with Steve Rembert, a certified Occupational Therapy Assistant. He stops by three times a week to work with her, focusing on stretching and eye-hand coordination. You're doing great, Marion!



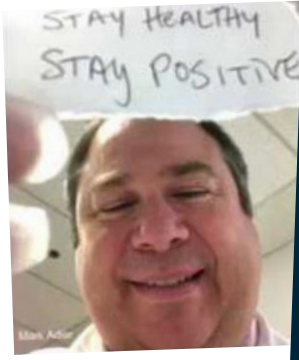
The Skilled Nursing staff keeps things lively for residents with theme days once a week. Here are our heroes dressed as Super Heroes. Cool!



Lions Gate had a drive by siren parade from the Voorhees Township Police and Fire Departments in honor of all our healthcare staff for Nurse's Week.

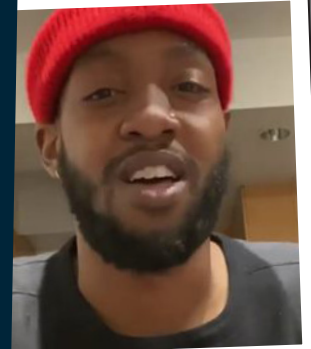


Here's a photo from Nurse's Week. Thank you to our hardworking Nursing Staff. We don't know what we'd do without you!



The Board of Trustees sent a video to the staff expressing their appreciation for our Lions Gate Heroes — "We honor your courage, we salute your strength, we pray for your wellbeing, and we want you to know you are appreciated beyond words!"

Anthony (Ant) Clemons Jr, son of Lions Gate's Independent Living Program Director, Kim Clemons Smith, is a popular singer-songwriter, who just happened to have his start working at Lions Gate. He lives in Los Angeles now, working with a multitude of artists including Kanye West, Beyoncé, Jay-Z, the Sunday Service Choir, and more. He produced a special song and video just for the Lions Gate staff thanking them for all they've done throughout this pandemic.



Meet Michael Cruz, our LIONS GATE Renaissance Man!

What is the first thing you do in a pandemic? For most of us, we grabbed a snack and turned on the TV to watch the news. Naturally, most of us ran out of snacks pretty quickly, but not the residents at Lions Gate. Michael Cruz came to their rescue! Michael is the Lions Gate Transportation Specialist, and normally he spends his days coordinating residents' trips to doctor's offices, dentist appointments, shopping trips, and cultural outings. But when the world came to a standstill and Lions Gate went into shelter-in-place mode, Michael sprang into action.

"My supervisor asked me if I would be interested in helping residents one-on-one," said Michael. "We knew everyone would want to stock their refrigerator, but they really shouldn't be going to the grocery store. So I became the personal shopper of Lions Gate! Before you knew it, people started emailing me their shopping lists, and now I shop for at least 10 people a day. I thought I knew everyone well before, but with my door-to-door shopping deliveries, I've gotten to know everyone like family. We are tight."

At the time of this newsletter printing, Michael doesn't just do grocery runs. He's happy to shop anywhere a resident requests

— Trader Joe's, Wegmans, Walmart, Target, CVS, the Dollar Store. Whether they need a prescription or a favorite food, Michael is on the hunt. "I've shopped for everything from kosher chicken to lox and bagels. The Shop Rite staff know me well, and get me in and out quickly. They know I have a lot of shopping to do!"

Right now he only drives residents to the occasional doctor appointment in between his big shopping trips, but he's always full of great conversation.

"I drive a Harley, and play guitar in the Lions Gate talent show," laughs Michael. "You'd think I wouldn't have anything in common with my Lions Gate friends, but that's not true. We have great conversations all the time. You never run out of things to talk about when your heart is open. I love working here!"

Thank you for all you do, Michael! We love you like family, too!



Wellness Nurse, Rebecca Agbim, keeps everyone at Lions Gate healthy and happy!

Everyone is jealous of Rebecca Agbim's wheels. Her super-speedy scooter is packed with every medical gadget you can imagine, so when there is an emergency in the Lions Gate community, Rebecca is always first on the scene with all her gear.

"I have been a nurse for 28 years," said Rebecca, "and I have been working to keep Lions Gate residents healthy for 7 years. I know virtually everyone in this building, and it's my job to keep all of our Independent Living residents in great health so they can enjoy their retirement for many, many years. I triage every incident that happens here, and my scooter is outfitted with oxygen tanks, an AED, an entire first aid satchel, and anything else I may need to help a resident in crisis. If someone falls and they push the emergency button on their call bell pendant, I hop on my scooter and can get to them in a matter of minutes with all of my gear. I really love everyone here, and I take my role as health advocate very seriously. We are like family here, and I want only the best for each and every one of them."

As you can imagine, Rebecca has been extra vigilant in her wellness protocols for all our residents during the pandemic. She has worked tirelessly to keep our Independent Living residents safe and healthy while sheltering-in-place, but she doesn't do it alone.

"Our Lions Gate Wellness Center is part of the Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine and its Institute for Successful Aging," said Rebecca. "For the convenience of our residents, we have two Rowan physicians who see patients in our Wellness Center, as well as regular hours for physicians of various specialties — Podiatrist, ENT, Dermatologist, Audiologist, etc. We also have Elaine Weiss from Rowan University, the unit secretary in the Wellness Center. She helps all of our residents with their prescriptions, and makes appointments for everyone to meet with the Rowan doctors. While I'm busy assessing patients and deciding next steps, Elaine keeps us on track with individual medical records, scripts, and referrals. We are a great team!"

The Lions Gate Wellness Center is open five days a week, and Rebecca is the go-to nurse our residents rely on for continuing care. Thanks for everything, Rebecca! You and your scooter are keeping us all in tip top condition!



Programming Director, Kim Clemons, knows how to make sheltering-in-place FUN!

When the pandemic hit, Programming Director, Kim Clemons, knew she had to innovate to keep everyone entertained and engaged.

"At Lions Gate, we have a closed circuit TV channel just for our campus," said Kim. "When we chose to close the fitness center and Commons Hall to minimize social gatherings, I couldn't just leave residents high and dry with no exercise classes or religious services. So now I stream 5 pre-recorded exercise classes a day, and residents can keep moving in their apartments, doing everything from chair yoga to stretching. And Rabbi Rayna records her beautiful Shabbat services for us every Friday evening and Saturday morning for broadcast on our channel, so that has kept our Jewish congregants connected and supported. Our Channel 1970 is packed with programs from morning to night!"

Kim has turned the Lions Gate TV channel into the lifeline of the community. She fills the air time with Opera, Orchestra, and Ballet performances, Travel Documentaries, and a memory lane series of Classic Movies.

"I send out a listing of the programming for the day, so our residents can pick and choose when they want to tune in," said Kim. "It has really opened up a whole new way for residents to keep learning and growing here at Lions Gate."

Several years ago the Lions Gate residents created their own Music Guild to host a series of concerts at Lions Gate every year. But since in-person concerts needed to be tabled for now, Kim

partnered with Allegro Music Consultants to host a weekly concert series for the Lions Gate TV channel. "It was a huge hit," said Kim, "and the classical musicians we were introduced to were wonderful. I'm planning another series of concerts for the second half of the year. 2020 was not the year we had planned, but I am hoping that we can turn lemons into lemonade and everyone will really enjoy all the new programming on our Channel 1970."

Thanks for keeping our spirits up, Kim! You really know how to fill our days with fun!



PS: As this newsletter goes to press, Kim now has the green light to host in-person lectures that adhere to CDC guidelines. She has opened up Commons Hall, and marked off socially-distanced seating to hold 22 attendees per class. There are two sanitation stations, so residents sanitize on their way in and again on their way out. Residents call Kim to reserve their spot in the classes of their choice, and each is offered twice to keep class sizes small. Right now, Kim's slate of classes includes Current Events with Jeanette Axelrod, History with Steve Pollack, Archaeology with Dr. Steve Phillips, World Tour with Judy Okun, and Jewish Studies with Rabbi Rayna Grossman. Kim is hoping to continue to expand her slate of live class offerings over the summer, and residents are thrilled to safely resume live programming. It's shaping up to be a great summer of learning at Lions Gate!

Activities Director, Cookie Pedersen, turns friends into family

Cookie Pedersen's original life plan was to go to Nashville, and become a country music star. "While I was waiting for my big break, I needed a day job to pay the bills. I really liked working with seniors, so I took a position at a senior living community. Turns out, I loved it just as much as singing, so I made a U-turn back to NJ, and the rest is history."

Activities Director, Cookie Pedersen, has plenty on her plate keeping the residents in Assisted Living, Skilled Nursing, Rehabilitation Services, and Memory Care all active and engaged.

"I have the best staff in the world," smiled Cookie. "Through all of this uncertainty, our staff has never wavered. They are the most compassionate and caring people I have ever met. I can't say 'thank you' enough to them. I've been at Lions Gate for over 10 years, and I love my job, but my staff is the true heart and soul of this community."

Cookie and her staff tirelessly go above and beyond to make residents feel supported and loved, and the families are so grateful for their efforts. One family was so moved by the care given to their family member that they recently donated two iPads to Cookie's team so that they can host video chats for each resident with their loved ones.

"A family member recently sent me an email," said Cookie. It read, 'My Zeyda passed away this week. You do not know the magnitude of my last visit with him. Thank you so much for letting me see him one more time. I will never forget your kindness.' It's those kinds of bonds that we make with residents and families that make me know that what we do here really matters."

Thank you Cookie and staff for all you do. We are so grateful you're part of the Lions Gate family!



Welcome Director of Philanthropy Lisa Goldwasser



Lions Gate is proud to welcome Lisa Goldwasser as our new Director of Philanthropy! Hired in December, Lisa was only on the job a few months before our community established a new shelter-in-place routine. Up until that point, Lisa had been responsible for all fundraising activities for Lions Gate, as well as connecting with the business community at large in the region. She had also been working with Friends of Jewish Senior Housing, preparing for the annual Tacos & Tequila event, the largest fundraising event for the year. When the committee decided to cancel this year's fundraiser amid COVID concerns, Lisa reached out to the event sponsors to see if they would contribute their sponsorship dollars into the newly established COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund.

"I spoke to each and every sponsor, and they couldn't have been more kind and supportive of our efforts," said Lisa. "I want to give all of them a huge shout out here. They deserve all the credit in the world!"

The Tacos & Tequila sponsors that rolled their sponsorship into the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund include:

- Kosher Mart Foods
- Friedman LLC
- Kaminer Financial Group LTD
- Samaritan Hospice
- Odell Studner Group LLC
- Forman Foundation
- Platt Memorial Chapels Inc
- Fox Rehabilitation
- Alexander Reid Home Construction
- Cupersmith, Wilensky, Stempler & Co LLP
- Davis Enterprises
- Donald & Judy Love
- M. Rosenblatt Roofing & Siding

In addition to sponsors, many of the community members who would have purchased tickets for the event also generously donated to the fund. The COVID Solidarity Response Fund has helped Lions Gate purchase PPE equipment (masks, gowns, gloves) and testing kits for our staff and residents, purchase iPads that our residents can sign out to video chat with their family members, provide special online programming, and so much more. As long as this pandemic continues, we will need to continue to purchase all of these items and more to maintain the health and safety of our residents and staff. Any support you can provide to our COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund would be most appreciated. You can donate online via our website at lionsgateccrc.org/Tacosandtequila or you can mail a check to Lions Gate, 1110 Laurel Oak Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043, Attn: Lisa Goldwasser/Director of Philanthropy. In the memo line please indicate: COVID 19 Donation. As a token of our appreciation, upon receipt of your donation we will send you a commemorative Lions Gate 2020 Tacos & Tequila shot glass.

"It is my sincere hope that we'll all be able to come together for next year's Tacos & Tequila event," said Lisa, "to celebrate our shared journey through this pandemic as well as the unshakeable bonds of support we all have for our Jewish community. I couldn't be more proud to be part of Lions Gate."

Thanks Lisa! We're happy to have you on board, too!

BIG NEWS! LIONS GATE Earns a ZERO DEFICIENCIES rating!

The results are in: Lions Gate received outstanding marks from the New Jersey Department of Health COVID-19 Infection Control Survey. The onsite survey, completed May 19th, reported ZERO DEFICIENCIES in Lions Gate's ability to implement proper infection prevention and control practices to prevent the development and transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases and infections.

"I want to commend my staff," said Susan Love, CEO of Lions Gate, "especially those in direct contact with our residents and those in charge of our cleaning and infection control, for their tireless efforts to keep our Lions Gate family safe, as well as thanking our residents and families who were in compliance so we could contain the virus. As we now see more light at the end of the tunnel, we are even better prepared to anticipate any challenges that may arise."

As of this newsletter printing, we are conducting bi-weekly COVID testing of all employees and the residents in healthcare. Lions Gate, will continue to follow all guidelines from the CDC, the NJ Department of Health, and local agencies to ensure the community is well protected.

"As the state of NJ gradually opens up, and life as we know it begins to return to normal, Lions Gate is proceeding with great caution," said Susan Love. "We have implemented essential protocols, services, and precautions to protect our residents and employees to the best of our ability. We have also installed new signage throughout the Lions Gate campus to encourage everyone to keep up the good work in stopping the spread of germs — wash your hands, wear a mask, and maintain social distancing of 6 feet."

Stay safe, and be well!



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Chef Shannon dishes out love during the pandemic!

Chef Shannon Johnson knows that many people equate food with love, so when the Lions Gate campus began sheltering-in-place, she came up with innovative ways to “spread the love” to every resident.

“For the health and safety of everyone living at Lions Gate, we closed the dining room and hand-delivered dinner to every resident,” said Shannon. “But I wanted to come up with new and different ways to surprise residents with special snacks a few times a week. One morning we delivered Muffins and Mimosas. Another day we went door-to-door with an ice cream sundae cart. The residents love the surprise factor. It gives them something to look forward to.”

Chef Shannon’s surprise treats have run the gamut. Residents have been delighted with deliveries of soft pretzels, a wine and cheese tray, fruit and yogurt parfaits, pigs in a blanket, hummus and pita, water ice, and fresh cannolis.

“The shelter-in-place order has forced everyone to isolate,” said Chef Shannon, “but food is a universal way to bring comfort and joy to your day. It doesn’t have to be fancy food. It just has to come from the heart. I made blueberry trifle for everyone one day, and the residents couldn’t have been more appreciative. It was like a party in a cup!”

The food deliveries give residents an opportunity to chat with the staff at a safe social distance, but it also gives the staff a chance to check in on residents who might not be coping well with the isolation.

“We get to know the residents so well, that we can tell when someone is struggling,” said Chef Shannon. “We’ve called the wellness nurse several times about specific residents that really needed a helping hand. We’re family here, and we look out for each other.”

Chef Shannon always makes an extra special Shabbat meal every Friday, and for Passover she was able to purchase disposable Seder plates for everyone, and delivered all of the components. For Mother’s Day, she whipped up lamb chops and chocolate covered strawberries, and for Father’s Day, she served grilled steaks.

“Like I said, food is love,” said Chef Shannon. “And I try to show the love to our staff as well. We did a big staff BBQ on April 22 to thank them for all they had done during the pandemic, and we hosted a 4th of July BBQ for all of the residents and staff. We may not be able to celebrate together as in years past, but we can all enjoy the same plate of food.”

In this era of social distancing, Shannon’s BBQ is like a warm hug. Thank you for the food love, Chef Shannon!

